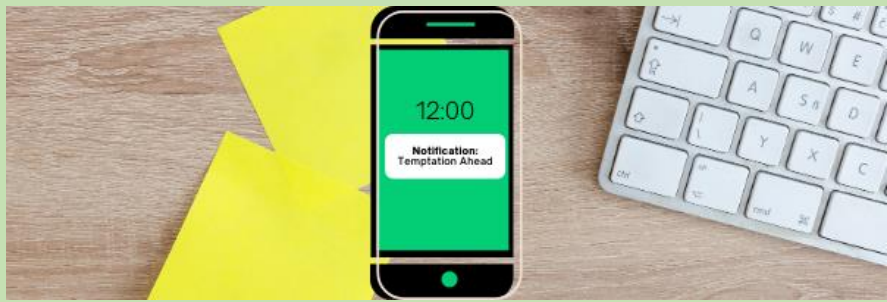




UPCOMING SERIES NOTIFICATION: TEMPTATION AHEAD



SMALL GROUP LEADER CORNER

Hey Small Group Leaders! We've got a series coming up where you will have a lot of opportunity to speak truth in students' lives to help them navigate a particularly difficult area – relationships and sex.

WHAT THIS SERIES IS NOT:

- It's not an encouragement to date.
- It's not a sex education class.

WHAT THIS SERIES IS:

- **An opportunity to open communication channels** and encourage students to seek Godly wisdom and advice in an area they may not feel comfortable to bring up on their own.
- **An opportunity for middle school students to build some Biblical foundations** in a pivotal area of life that can have huge impact on their future.
- **An opportunity to partner with parents** by not only sharing what we are talking about with them in advance, but consistently encouraging our students to have conversations with their parents on this topic at home.

IS IT TOO EARLY TO HAVE THESE CONVERSATIONS?

- Crushes, new feelings, attractions, urges and even pressures to date are becoming more and more of our students' worlds as they grow up. **We want to have age-appropriate conversations that prepare students.**
- We intentionally have it built into the first message for the speaker to say "sex" on stage because it's a word that carries a lot of weight, and we want to break the ice from stage that church is a safe place to talk about sex.
- Did you know **the average age of exposure to porn is 8-11 years old?** 80% of this happens within the home. Our goal is to equip students to know how to respond Biblically when sexual temptations arise.

HOW WILL WE HELP YOU PREPARE TO LEAD DISCUSSIONS FOR THIS SERIES?

- We will be sharing our whole series resources with you further in advance so you can BEGIN PRAYING AND PREPARING NOW for leading your students through this.
- This packet includes extra resources to help you navigate different conversations your students may bring up during this lesson.

WHAT DO MY STUDENTS NEED FROM ME?

- Your students don't need you to have all the right answers. They are in a phase where an important part of owning their faith means discovering the right answer themselves. They simply need you to be a safe place to have conversations, seek answers, and guide them in the right direction.
- Your students don't need you to teach your opinion but for you to help them understand God's word.
- You don't need to have a perfect past-record in this area to lead, simply a heart that has repented towards God and is strongly seeking to take steps in the right direction. Letting students know some of your past struggles may even help them relate to you and trust your advice, but remember to keep conversations age-appropriate. Be cautious when you share, speaking generally and avoiding specifics or graphic comments. If you question if sharing would cause a student to struggle, then hold off sharing.

FREQUENTLY ASKED STUDENT RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONS AND WISDOM TO ANSWER

WHEN CAN YOU HAVE SEX?

Officially, sexual immorality is used in the Bible to describe sex outside of marriage, including lust. Sex is beautifully designed to bring together a man and woman in marriage. If you aren't close to thinking about getting married, the wise thing to do is to create healthy boundaries in your life so you are staying far from sexual sin.

HOW FAR IS TOO FAR TO GO BEFORE MARRIAGE?

"How far is too far" is a BIG question that comes up a lot, but really it can be the wrong question if we are just asking "How far can I go before I sin?" It's like walking up to the edge of the cliff, putting one foot over the edge, and hoping not to fall. Not the wisest. The wiser thing to ask is, "Is this wise to do? Is this tempting me to go farther?" If it's tempting you to go farther, then STOP!

Relevant Bible verses:

- "So be careful how you live, not as fools but as those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but try to understand what the Lord wants you to do." – Ephesians 5:15-17
- "Run away from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. Or don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God?" – 1 Corinthians 6: 18-19

BUT CAN'T WE SLEEP TOGETHER IF WE ARE IN LOVE?

God's healthy boundaries for sex isn't love, it's in marriage. Love may "feel" right, but there are negative consequences of having sex outside of marriage. In God's definition of love, love is patient and kind; it does not seek to please itself, nor does it delight in evil, but is always hopeful (1 Corinthians 13). True love would be patient in waiting for the proper time for sex. It would be kind to future spouses by not pre-harming marital intimacy. True love would be unselfish in placing God's desires and the needs of others above itself. It would not delight in the evil of disobedience, nor would it force another to disobey God. Love could never be a reason for premarital sex; rather, it should be one of the greatest reasons to avoid premarital sex. "But we're going to be married anyway." This is another common excuse. Along with being presumptuous, this stance will almost certainly leave one question unanswered: If one gives in to moral temptation before marriage, what's to stop him or her from giving in to moral temptation once married?

WHAT IF I'VE ALREADY GONE TOO FAR?

Good question! Certainly a person cannot reverse the past, but there are a number of steps one should take to keep from further damaging his or her intimacy with God and others.

First, acknowledge your actions as sin. For those who have accepted Christ's payment of the penalty for their sins, He asks only that they confess - agree with God that they are sinful. **Second, maintain purity from this moment forward.** Jesus told the woman caught in sexual sin to "go and sin no more" (John 8:11). You cannot change what's been done, but you can keep yourself and others from any further damage by avoiding situations which might cause you to compromise your commitment to sexual purity. Paul advised Timothy to run away from temptation (2 Timothy 2:22), and Joseph is famous for running from moral danger (Genesis 39:7-12).

WHAT IF I'M DATING SOMEONE AND I KNOW THEY ARE NOT THE BEST FOR ME RIGHT NOW?

This is a tough place to be because you likely care deeply for the person. You need to break up with them ASAP. The longer you wait, the more you are wasting your time and theirs. You can be kind when you break up with them, but be clear. The purpose of dating is not to be on the mission field; the purpose of dating is not to be someone's support system. You shouldn't feel pressure to date for either of these reasons. Pray for God to guide you in breaking up with them.

PORNOGRAPHY AND MASTURBATION

IS MASTURBATION AND/OR PORNOGRAPHY A SIN?

One can not point to a verse in the Bible and read that masturbation is wrong. However, what accompanies the act of masturbation is usually something visual—whether only in the mind or by viewing pornography in pictures or video. Those things would fall under the category of immorality since giving in to immoral thoughts is sin—masturbation is enacting sex with an object (woman or man) in mind. Jesus even said that a married man commits adultery when he thinks lustfully after a woman (Matthew 5:27-28). So to masturbate—enacting sex—while thinking of a man or woman who is not your spouse is sinful because it is immoral. Sex is meant to be between a man and a woman in the context—and only in the context—of marriage. This is saying nothing about masturbation creating an emotional guilt that is hard to relieve until the act and/or habit is stopped.

I'M STRUGGLING TO STOP, HOW CAN I STOP?

If you are struggling with masturbation and/or pornography and want to stop, several things are helpful.

1. First, **acknowledge that it is sin** and that it brings emotional guilt.
2. Second, **make a decision to stop**.
3. Third, **have a plan not to do it again**. It is this third and final step that most people don't do.
Good intentions without a solid plan inevitably leads to repetition.

A good plan always includes accountability. Find a God centered adult, maybe a parent or guardian or small group leader; that you can tell in confidence who will follow up and ask you if you are victorious. A good plan also includes what action you will take when you are tempted. Maybe get up and go hang out with someone else, pray, memorize Scripture, sing praise songs. How can you lean into God to help you fight in the moment of temptation?

Be aware of when you are most susceptible to masturbating: Stress? After you are away from your boyfriend or girlfriend and begin thinking of them in a sexual way? Pornography? The books you read? Once you determine the contributing factors, tell your accountability partner. Knowing the factors and telling someone trustworthy are ways to break the cycle of repetition.

ACCOUNTABILITY SOFTWARE RESOURCES

- Ever Accountable: <https://www.everaccountable.com/>
- Accountable2you.app: <https://www.accountable2you.com/features>
- Covenant eyes (better for computer): <http://www.covenanteyes.com/>
- Net Nanny (gives deeper parental controls): <https://www.netnanny.com>
- Triple X Church (free but limited): <https://x3watch.com/>

PURSUING SEXUAL INTEGRITY

We encourage staff, leaders, and parents to use the language “sexual integrity” over “sexual purity” because the term “sexual purity” can have a lot of baggage associated with it. What if a student has crossed a line and sexually or lustfully sinned? There is grace, redemption, and power when they turn to Jesus in repentance! **Sexual integrity is about saying, “YES!” to living a faithful, abundant life as a sexual being according to how God has designed you.**

Our students need to know God's love them first and foremost. Our goal for this series is not simply behavior modification or for students to try to self-will themselves to stay virgins, but for students connect with the transformational work of Jesus in their lives and live in His design for them. **All of our obedience, all of our ability to pursue sexual integrity, is a response of God's love for us and through His power working within us.**

Leading in Grace and Truth

With an LGBT emphasis
(lesbian - gay - bisexual - transgender)

Main Goal: Create a Safe Place to Belong

Lead your group to value acceptance, confidentiality, and honesty. Also, know what you can and can not keep confidential.

Atmosphere of Grace: An atmosphere begins with the heart but it is reflected in speech. Even casually using the phrase "that's so gay" in a derogatory manner shuts down an atmosphere of grace. Do not speak this way and immediately correct students who do. All students belong in

our ministry - no matter their beliefs or behavior.



A storm cloud can form in the soul when an individual feels tension between their religious and sexual identities.

What do I do if a student shares they have a sexual identity struggle?

First, remember the A.T.A.'s (below). Then, mentor and resource.

1

ACKNOWLEDGE

Acknowledge their **COURAGE** in sharing such personal information with you

2

THANK

THANK them and show your **GRATITUDE** for their **TRUST** in you

3

ASSURE

Assure them that if it's best to share with others you will let them know and give them a chance to do so first

Great resources for further information and help:

Is God anti-gay?

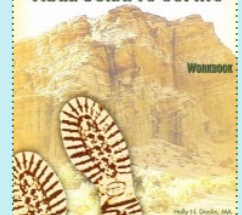
And other questions about homosexuality, the Bible and same-sex attraction



Is God Anti-gay? By Sam Allberry

A Biblical look at homosexuality and same-sex

TRAIL GUIDE TO COPING



attraction

A Trail Guide to Coping

A workbook for teens struggling with sexual identity

What does the Bible say?

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right." - 2 Timothy 3:16 (NLT)

- ▶ God created us male and female (Genesis 1:27 & 5:2)
- ▶ Homosexual behavior is a sin (Leviticus 18:22 & Romans 1:18-27)
- ▶ We are ALL sinners in need of Jesus' forgiveness and grace! (Romans 3:23)
- ▶ We are called to speak the TRUTH IN LOVE (Ephesians 4:15)

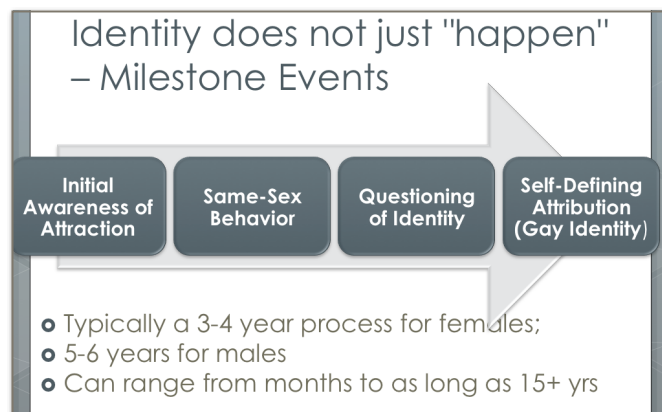
What is a choice?

We are all tempted with various sins, some stronger to us than others. **Being tempted is NOT a choice but how we respond is our choice.** Having same-sex attractions or transgender feelings are NOT a choice. Claiming a same-sex/transgender identity label or participating in same-sex behavior IS a choice.

Adolescent Development

Sexual identity does not just happen

instantaneously. There is a progression of milestones that happen as a person wrestles with their inner storm. **Encourage your student not to label themselves but to seek godly wisdom and support.** Adolescence is a time of significant



physical, cognitive, and social development. Teens are in the Identity Role vs. Role Confusion Stage; The two main questions they ask themselves are, "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?" It's important the church has supportive answers for both. Lots of shame, guilt, and depression can come with this storm, but **remind your students that Jesus came to set us free and overcome shame, guilt, and depression!**

LAST THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- 1) CREATE A SAFE PLACE IN SMALL GROUPS
- 2) WE CAN NOT TEACH OUR OPINION
- 3) WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

We don't have to have all the answers when we lead, we just need to walk alongside with the One who does!

You, your student, and their family are NOT alone. Student Ministry staff are here to partner with you and your students in helping them discover and follow God's incredible plan for their life! **Talk to your campus staff ASAP if a transgender student wants to be in a different small group than their physical gender.** If you have more to talk through, contact Student Ministry Staff.

References: Dr. Yarhouse, Sam Allberry, The Holy Bible, Lead Small



NOTIFICATION: TEMPTATION AHEAD SERIES OVERVIEW



SERIES AT A GLANCE

TEACHING THEME

Moral Boundaries*
(details on back)

SERIES OVERVIEW

When a phone battery is running low, a notification pops up with a warning. Temptation pops up everywhere we go: school, hanging out with friends, even when we are home alone. While we don't get a notification right before every temptation, we are actually already given lots of notifications in the Bible to always be alert for approaching temptations, prepare to overcome them, and resist them by turning to God. When your next temptation comes up, will you choose to turn to Jesus to overcome it or dismiss the warning?

SERIES GOALS TO SHARE EACH WEEK

- OPEN COMMUNICATION - We know talking about sex can feel awkward, but we want to open up the lines of communication because we care and it's important.
- THIS IS FOR YOU - Even in middle school, this applies to you because things like crushes, attractions, temptations, desires – they all spin off from this topic of sex.
- JESUS CONNECTION: God knew we'd give in to temptation and sin, so He sent Jesus to rescue us and pay the penalty for our sins.
- RECAP main points shared in series so far (included in message resource)

WEEK BY WEEK

WEEK 1: MARCH 7, 2021

- **MAIN POINT:** Sex is good and sex is powerful, so respect it.
- **MAIN SCRIPTURE(S):** Genesis 1:27-28 & 2:24
- **SECONDARY TEACHING POINTS:**
 - o God created sex and it's good.
 - o Sex is designed to be enjoyed by a man and woman committed to each other in marriage.
 - o When sex is used in a right way, it's extremely powerful in a good way. When sex is used in a wrong way, it's extremely powerful in a bad way. So respect it.
 - o Attractions and temptations are not sin, but acting on lust or engaging in sexual behavior outside of God's design of marriage is sin.

WEEK 2: MARCH 14

- **MAIN POINT:** A screen isn't a loophole around temptation and sin; it can be a trap that's just as dangerous and addictive.
- **MAIN SCRIPTURE:** 1 Corinthians 6:18-20
- **SECONDARY TEACHING POINTS:**
 - o Though it isn't face-to-face, what happens on your screen is real life.
 - o What can you do to avoid this trap?
 1. Respect others, yourself, and sex.
 2. Honor God with your body, posts, and views.
 3. Run from sexual sin (temptation to use it outside it's intended context of marriage)

WEEK 3: MARCH 21

- **MAIN POINT:** As Christians we are called to balance living in God's grace and truth.
- **MAIN SCRIPTURES:** Zacchaeus story overview, Romans 2:4, Matthew 19:4-5, Romans 1:26-30
- **TEACHING POINTS (GRACE):**
 - o Zacchaeus example: Zacchaeus was a tax-collector in an anti-tax collector culture. Zacchaeus encountered God's kindness in Jesus before he began following Jesus.
 - o What is Sin? Attractions and temptations are not sin, but acting on lust or engaging in sexual behavior outside of God's design of marriage is sin.
- **TEACHING POINTS (TRUTH):**
 - o Jesus and the Bible define marriage as a union between a man and a woman.
 - o The Bible defines same-sex relationships as sin.
 - o God loves all people but hates all sin. We all need Jesus. We have all sinned and all need forgiveness that only Jesus can give to us.

WEEK 4: MARCH 28

- **MAIN POINT:** We all need accountability – every step you take is a step in the right direction.
- **MAIN SCRIPTURE(S):** Hebrews 4:13-16 & James 5:16
- **NOTE:** During SG time, have opposite gender panel to answer questions
- **TEACHING POINTS:** 5 Steps to Hold Yourself Accountable
 - o Be honest with yourself and others (Hebrews 4:13)
 - o Commit to God's ways (John 14:15)
 - o Invite others to keep you accountable (James 5:16)
 - o Make a Plan (Goals and guardrails)
 - o Rinse and Repeat (When you sin, remember God is forgiving and cheering you on every step you take closer to Him)

*TEACHING THEME

Moral Boundaries

Think of moral boundaries like a fence: on one side is all the good, moral behaviors we can freely act on and outside of the fence are the immoral behaviors that will hurt us. Jesus doesn't want us to just see a list of yes and no's, but the Bible does give us moral boundary guidelines because **God defines in the Bible what sin is for us because He knows that boundaries protect us.** God sees a bigger picture for our lives full of hope, joy, peace, freedom, etc. Learning how to protect our bodies and emotions, **to honor God's plan for sex and morality,** and respect ourselves and others - **it's not about restrictions, it's actually about living more in God's freedom.**



Notification: Temptation Ahead
Week 1 of 4
March 7, 2021

LEADER PREP

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

- (1) To open conversation and let students know small group is a safe place to talk about attractions, relationships, and sex.
- (2) To point students toward relying on God's Word, parents, and church leaders more than their friends or culture when it comes to understanding attraction, relationships, and sex.

SCRIPTURE

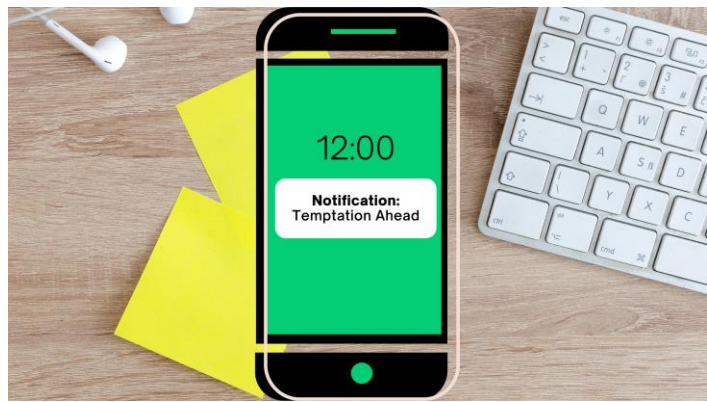
Genesis 1:27-28 & 2:24

THINK ABOUT THIS

Due to the nature of this series topic, we want you to be extra prepared in spirit, heart, and mind. Please be sure to take extra time on your own before leading lessons to:

- Read over all the material in leader packet,
- Attend huddles on time,
- And pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare you and lead you as you lead your students in discussion.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.



CONVERSATION GUIDE

MAIN POINT

Sex is good and sex is powerful, so respect it.

GET THEM TALKING

1. How can notifications, like on a phone, be helpful?
2. What are some consequences of ignoring notifications?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

3. On a scale from 1 to 10, hold up your fingers to show: How comfortable do you feel about talking in small groups about things like dating, attraction, and sex? *Be honest, it's ok. We get it may not always feel comfortable, but we want you to know this is a safe place to talk about these things because we care about you and think it's important.*

READ GENESIS 1:27-28 & 2:24 and answer the following questions:

4. Who created sex?
5. How did God design for it to be used?
6. What are some negative consequences of using sex outside of its original design?
7. Why is this important to talk about now?
8. What are different things people at school, in tv/movies, or social media say about dating, attraction, and sex?
9. Do you think those are the best, most reliable sources for information? Where else can you go for reliable, godly information?
10. What are ways middle schoolers can respect God's design for sex?

NEXT STEP

You may still have questions or questions may come up later. Remember **to think through who you are hearing advice from about attraction, dating, and sex and if they are the most reliable source?** Take your questions to a godly, trusted adult who can speak wisdom into your life.

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask your students to share their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

SCRIPTURE

MS students are concrete thinkers, so opening your Bible to read the Scripture with them is a preferred visual cue.

GENESIS 1:27-28 & 2:24 (NIV)

"So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.....²⁴ That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh."



Notification: Temptation Ahead
Week 2 of 4
March 14, 2021

LEADER PREP

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

For students to realize even though it isn't face-to-face, what happens on their screen is real life and effects their spiritual life.

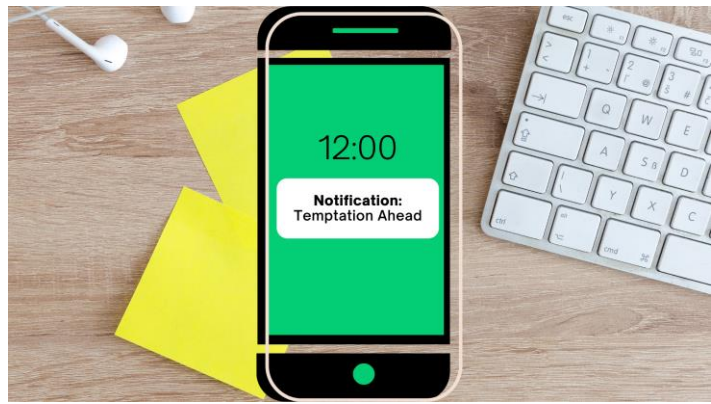
SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

THINK ABOUT THIS

Your students' parents will have different techniques and rules about using technology: let's honor our students' parents by being supportive of their parenting decisions. Some of your students may have their own smart devices, others may only be allowed to use their parents occasionally. It will be natural for your students to complain about any limits or boundaries their parents may have put on using technology. Try to encourage your student that although that may not feel good, their parent setting those limits is a good thing and shows how much they care for them!

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.



CONVERSATION GUIDE

MAIN POINT

A screen isn't a loophole around temptation and sin; it can be a trap that's just as dangerous and addictive.

GET THEM TALKING

What are some of your favorite apps?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can technology be helpful?
2. How can technology be harmful?
3. We are going to read today's Bible verse. As we do, I want you to think how you would explain to a friend what this verse is asking us to do and why:

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 6:18-20 and answer the following questions:

4. How would you explain to a friend what this verse is asking us to do? Why is it asking us that?
5. If we truly believe our bodies belong to God, how should that affect the way we treat and dress our bodies?
6. If we truly believe other people's bodies belong to God, how should that affect the way we treat and look at others?
7. When it comes to technology, what are ways you can honor God with what you post and what you watch?

NEXT STEP & PRAYER GUIDE

God says His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, lives inside all of those who believe in Him and helps them to overcome temptation. We are going to take a few silent moments in prayer and I want you to think: what temptations do I face? Ask God to help you overcome those temptations. Give students a few minutes in silent prayer, then close in prayer asking God to hear everyone's prayers, forgive your sin, and help you overcome temptations.

SCRIPTURE

MS students are concrete thinkers, so opening your Bible to read the Scripture with them is a preferred visual cue.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:18-20 (NLT)

¹⁸ Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. ¹⁹ Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body."



Notification: Temptation Ahead
Week 3 of 4
March 21, 2021

LEADER PREP

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

To give students a safe environment to read and discuss different Scriptures that discuss same-sex sexuality.

SCRIPTURE

Romans 1:26-27 & Romans 2:4

THINK ABOUT THIS

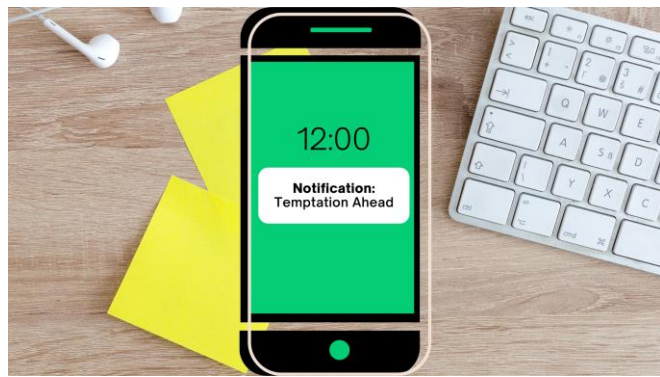
We are called to share God's truth in love. **Just a reminder that we are not here to teach our opinion but God's word.** It can be tempting to want to pick and choose which Bible verses we believe. If some of your students start sharing thoughts like, "I don't believe THAT scripture," remind them of these verses:

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." – 2 Timothy 3:16-17

"Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you." – Deuteronomy 4:2

Also, **go into your conversation with the mindset that one of your students might have this sin struggle.** This will help you speak with compassion and grace as you discuss God's truth.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.



CONVERSATION GUIDE

MAIN POINT

As Christians we are called to balance living in God's grace and truth.

GET THEM TALKING

What are different opinion you've heard about same-sex sexuality?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you think about what as shared in the video?

READ ROMANS 1:26-27 and answer the following questions:

2. This verse is showing us that by God's definition same-sex lust and relations are sin. During the message, they shared that attraction and temptations aren't sin, but lust and sexual behaviors outside of God's design for marriage are sin. In your own words, what are the differences between attraction, temptations, lust, and behaviors?
3. How can we turn to God when we face temptations?

READ ROMANS 2:4 and answer the following questions:

4. Does anyone know what repentance means? (Repentance is when you are genuinely sorry and want to change and move in a direction closer to God.)
5. This verse, just a few after the first one we read, says that God is rich in kindness. What are different ways we can we see God's kindness?
6. We all need Jesus. How can remembering that help us reflect God's kindness to others?

NEXT STEP

Some of the people in the video shared how it was hard for them to talk about their experiences with others.

- 1) If a friend shares they have this struggle, how can you show them love and kindness?
- 2) If you find yourself struggling with these feelings or thoughts, reach out to a parent or godly adult in your life to walk alongside you.

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask your students to share their prayer requests and close in prayer.

SCRIPTURE

MS students are concrete thinkers, so opening your Bible to read the Scripture with them is a preferred visual cue.

ROMANS 1:26-27 (NIV)

“Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.”

ROMANS 2:4 (NIV)

“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?”



Notification: Temptation Ahead
Week 4 of 4
March 28, 2021



LEADER PREP

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

- (1) To give students a safe space to ask questions of opposite gender leaders
- (2) To inspire students to take their step in overcoming temptation and realize God is cheering them as they do.

THINGS TO KNOW

Today's small group time will be very different! Groups will divide into genders as usual, but there will be a panel of opposite gender leaders prepped to answer student's questions. Students hearing from godly men and women of the opposite gender can have a huge impact on students understanding and relating to the opposite sex.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

OPPOSITE GENDER PANEL DISCUSSION

- **INTRODUCE:** Go around the panel and have each leader share their name and a hobby they love.
- **GET THINGS STARTED:** Go back around and have each leader share one quick answer to this question (1 minute or less): If you could share one insight into your gender for the opposite gender to understand, what would it be?
- **GIVE STUDENTS TIME TO ASK THE PANEL QUESTIONS.** Give students a way to share their questions out loud or written down on notecards or typing in the chat, as some students may have different ways they feel comfortable asking questions. The goal for the panel isn't to have perfectly rehearsed answers but to give genuine, godly insight the best they can.

ALLOW 5 MINUTES AT THE END TO CLOSE YOUR TIME WITH WRAPPING UP BACK TO THE MESSAGE AND CLOSE OUT THE SERIES WITH A CLEAR NEXT STEP:

MAIN POINT

We all need accountability – every step you take is a step in the right direction.

NEXT STEP

Pass out the student handout (details on back). Encourage them to take the handout home, put it somewhere to remind them, and take their next step this week. Remind them YOU care for them and are there for them to talk to if they ever need some to help keep them accountable or cheer them on in their faith.

PRAYER GUIDE

Close in prayer.

SCRIPTURE

MS students are concrete thinkers, so opening your Bible to read the Scripture with them is a preferred visual cue.

JAMES 5:16 (NIV)

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

LEADER CORNER

Your students will all receive a handout that includes the steps below:

5 Steps to Hold Yourself

Accountable

1. Be Honest with yourself and God (Hebrews 4:13)
2. Commit to God's ways (John 14:15)
3. Invite others to keep you accountable (James 5:16)
4. Make a Plan (Set goals and guardrails to overcome temptation in place).
5. Rinse and Repeat (We will all mess up and sin again, but remember God is a loving, forgiving Father cheering you on every step you take towards following Him).